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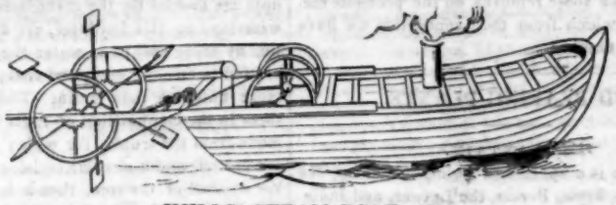

HULLS' STEAM BOAT, 1736.

ANECDOTES OF THE STEAM ENGINE.
No. VI.

The knowledge of the construction and peculiarities of steam machinery, extending by degrees among classes less directly interested in it as a subject for mechanical practice, than for the purpose of philosophical illustration, had given rise to an opinion that its invention sprung from scientific induction. But Desaguliers, in the beginning of the last century, ridicules this notion of its origin, and says that almost every improvement had been owing to chance. And it was probably waiting for similar good fortune that many parts of the machinery were left by later mechanics to chance for their further improvement. Great care and no small ingenuity had been expended on the cylinder and its appendages; the boiler had received a portion of attention, and its shape was regulated by geometrical canons; nor was the furnace forgotten. But the enormous quantities of coals engulphed in producing a very small power, was a draw back upon the usefulness of the steam engine. A great many experiments were now at work; their object being still to get power for the purpose of draining mines. Something had been said about applying it to mills; but no plan had been devised by which it could be adapted to impart motion to machinery.

In the year 1720, Leupold, the author of *Theatrum Machinarum*, is said to have constructed the first high pressure engine. Previous to this, the only use to which steam had been *effectively* applied, was in the formation of a vacuum. True it is that in the projects of Decaus, Branca and Savery, the elastic force of steam was proposed to be used; but the failure of these plans, by waste of steam and other causes, warrant our saying that the plan of Leupold entitles him to the great merit of having *invented and constructed the first high pressure engine.* His principle was simply that of applying highly elastic steam alternately upon two pistons in separate cylinders, so that as one ascended the other descended, and *vice versa.* It is impossible to give full descriptions and diagrams of the various engines and improvements, in the brief sketches to which we are confined, or we should take occasion to present this, which for simplicity has never been exceeded. "The extended use of high pressure engines at the present day," says an English author, "proves that the public opinion is materially changed in regard to their utility and safety. The risk of explosion was a draw back upon them, which successive improvements and skilful management have almost annihilated; and we have no doubt but the low pressure or condensing engine will be entirely abandoned in their favor. Their superior economy, by reduced consumption of fuel, and reduced friction, is sufficient ground for their adoption. We should observe, however, that there is still a mass of prejudice to contend with, ere this can possibly take place; and whilst America has scarcely a low pressure engine to work a steamboat, it would be a hazardous speculation to attempt the introduction of a high pressure one in England for that purpose."

In 1730, Dr. John Allen published a work on some of the new inventions of the day, in which is given an account of an invention for navigating a ship in a calm. He first enumerates the projects of others for propelling a ship in a more expeditious and less laborious way than by oars. In these he says the motion was communicated by machinery working without the ship, something analogous to oars or paddles, or by the revolution of wheels turned by a capstan placed within the ship. No part of his machinery, on the contrary, was placed on the outside of the vessel. He proposed to get a power by forming a tunnel or pipe open at the stern or hinder part of the vessel, and by means of a pump to force water or air into it through the sea, and by the reaction which this would occasion, the ship would be driven forward. He carried his scheme into practice in a boat of considerable size, upon a canal, and from that and other experiments he felt certain that the protrusion of *something* at the stern was the true way to navigate a vessel, and suggested that the operation of pumping, which was performed by men in his trials, could be better accomplished by the power of a steam engine, "and he could have no doubt that if a couple of them were applied to a ship of fourteen or fifteen hundred tons, they would impel it at the rate of three knots an hour."

In 1735 the comte de Saxe revived the project of wheel boats, and presented an account and plan to the academy of sciences of a barge moved by a wheel placed on each side of the boat.

In 1736 Jonathan Hulls, of London, published a description of a new mode of applying the power of a steam engine to navigate a vessel, which he called "A new invented machine for carrying vessels or ships out of or into any harbor, port or river, against wind or tide, or in a calm," for which he took out a patent. This new method was the application of the crank, which now, it is well known, enables us to employ the steam engine as a prime mover in almost every species of machinery. Unfortunately the public mind was not sufficiently matured to interest itself in the project; and in consequence, Hulls and his patent were so completely forgotten that the invention was subsequently claimed by Mr. Watt. Hulls' description and draught occupied eight pages of his pamphlet, which is still extant, containing forty-eight pages altogether. It is thought that the engine of Newcomen, the most complete one of that day, was not at all adapted to the proposed combination; still the idea was a great one, and the ingenious inventor deserved better success than he obtained. As this is the earliest picture of a steamboat of which we have any knowledge, it is presented as a curiosity. It will be seen that the author designed it merely for towing. It is not probable that this project was ever carried into execution. The application of the crank to the single acting engine has always been found a matter of great difficulty, because as the ascending stroke has to be effected by a counterbalance, an immense fly wheel is necessary to produce any thing like regularity, and it would be absolutely impossible to use such a fly wheel in a boat.

THE METALS—No. II.

GOLD.

Gold is the most precious of all the metals; the scarcest, and therefore the most valuable. Intrinsically it is amongst the least useful of them all. There is more philosophy and truth in the remark of our old friend Robinson Crusoe, when he discovered the lump of gold in the prosecution of his schemes of "internal improvement" on his happy island, than we are apt, at first perusal, to discover. "Ah!" said he as he turned the yellow dross with his foot, "of what value art thou to me?" Never was the worthlessness of what is, in life, the bane of life, more forcibly shown than in the act and meditations of Crusoe upon this event, and the moral truth it conveys comes with more effect than a thousand discourses from a thousand formal divines.

Gold was probably the first metal discovered by man, at least it is the first of which we have any accurate account, and seems to have been known from the earliest antiquity. It is possessed of no perceptible taste or smell, and is the only metal which has a yellow color, yielding in lustre only to platinum, steel, mercury and silver, and is rather softer than the latter.

Gold is not found mineralized like most other metals, but in what is termed the native state, and appears under a great diversity of circumstances, both as to the substances with which it is intermixed and the appearances which it presents; for instance, it is found massive; disseminated in particles; in films and strings; reticulated and arborescent; and also crystalized in diverse forms, single and in groups, and has often been found in alluvial situations, and in the beds of rivers, where it first probably attracted the attention of mankind. It is disseminated in all quarters of the globe, in greater or less quantities; in England; almost every country of Europe, and Asia; in Africa and in both North and South America; more especially the equatorial regions of the latter divisions. America is particularly rich in gold; for instance, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, and Chili; and many of the rivers, especially those of Carracas, abound in gold dust—small particles of gold in a pure state, supposed to have been washed down from the mountains. The simplest way of obtaining gold, consists in collecting these grains or small particles, especially after the heavy rains that visit those countries with tremendous though brief power. The manner is extremely simple. The sand intermingled with water is scraped into wooden bowls or calabashes, and whirled by the hands in a rapid circular manner. The sand and the soil, of course, fly over the top and sides, leaving the heavier particles, pebbles and gold at the bottom, from whence the minute particles are carefully collected. In some instances the skins of animals are laid in the water courses, and they retain

the metallic particles; and it is supposed to this circumstance can be traced the fable of the "golden fleece," so well known in classical mythology. The Brazilians formerly used blankets for the same purpose.

The same principle or manner of collecting gold dust is still pursued, on a vastly larger and more profitable scale, and is particularly described by Dr. Walch, who visited the gold mines of Brazil in 1829. His description, though interesting, is too long for our columns.

The process of mining and purifying gold differs according to circumstances, being sometimes digested with mercury, and at others reduced by fervent heat.

The specific gravity of gold is 19.3 and it is the most fixed and apparently incorruptible of all bodies, being almost incapable of oxidation by heat or saline exposure. It melts at 32 of Wedgwood's pyrometer. Bœrhaave informs us that an ounce of it was set in the eye of a glass furnace for two months without the loss of a single grain. It yields, however, like all other substances, to the solar rays concentrated by the burning glass, not only rising a vapor, but becoming converted into a violet colored vitrous oxide. Gold, when refined from all impurities and alloys of inferior metals, is denominated pure, or gold of twenty-four carats fine, this being the standard of purity recognized by the mint master and dealer in gold. It is, however, seldom so pure but that it wants about a quarter of a carat of this standard. We have said in a former paper that gold was the most malleable and ductile of all metals. Its tenacity is also considerable. A wire of gold one tenth of an inch in diameter will sustain five hundred pounds without breaking. Its malleability however, is most remarkable. A grain of gold reduced to leaves will cover fifty square inches, and each of these fifty inches may be divided into forty-six thousand six hundred and fifty-six other little squares, and therefore a grain of gold may be divided into two million three hundred and twenty-two thousand eight hundred parts, each of which is visible to the naked eye. The wonderful expansion of which this metal is capable has led to its employment for ornamental purposes to an extent which, from its scarcity, would otherwise be impossible. Thus a statue of natural size may be gilt with $2.50 worth of gold, and in India, where it is common to gild towers, bridges, gates, and colossal idols, it is attended with less expense. Gold wire, as it is called, is only silver wire gilt, and the gold, though not the slightest flaw is visible by the most powerful glasses, is only *one millionth* of an inch in thickness, and one grain of gold will, thus extended, cover a wire three hundred and forty-six feet long. Gold thread is nothing more than thread covered with the above gilt wire flattened. An ounce of gold extended on silver wire will extend one thousand three hundred miles. The Dutch manufacture a species of gold leaf, which is called Dutch leaf, being nothing more than gilt copper in thin leaves, and when new it is extremely difficult to distinguish it from pure leaf.

Pure acids have no effect on gold, and it can only be dissolved by a compound acid, composed of nitric and muriatic acids, and called nitro-muriatic acid. This acid dissolves it with great rapidity.

A variety of chemical compounds may be formed from gold for various purposes of experiment and use. Fulminating powder manufactured from it, is the most powerful of any explosive mixture known, so much so as to be almost incredible.

By far the greatest proportion of gold now in use in the world is from America. Humboldt estimates the average product of gold per year of South America at nearly twelve million dollars, and, great as it is, being only about in the proportion of one to forty of the value of silver produced.

Considerable quantities are now found in the United States, principally in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee. The amount in 1832 was, in value, about $678,000.

A volume might be written on this subject alone, of the value of different gold coins, the quantities produced yearly, and the quantity lost, by use, employment in the arts, fire, shipwreck, &c., but our limits forbid us that scope. In our next we shall speak of silver, and make some remarks on the precious metals generally, which from their connection we have omitted in this number.

FOOD BEARING PLANTS.

III. PLANTAIN.

The date tree is a species of palm, inhabiting the north of Africa, Syria, Persia, the Levant, and India. It thrives on the confines of the desert, wherever there is sufficient moisture, and is also cultivated in Italy and Spain. The date palm is a majestic tree, rising sixty feet and upwards; the trunk straight, simple, scaly, elegantly divided by rings, and crowned at the summit by a tuft of very long, pendent leaves. The leaves are ten or twelve feet in length. Repeated references are made to this tree in the sacred writings of the Hebrews and the Arabians. Mohammed compares the upright and generous man to the palm tree. "He stands erect before his Lord; in his every action he follows the impulse received from above, and his whole life is devoted to the welfare of his fellow creatures." The fruit is an oval, soft, fleshy drupe, in the shape of an acorn, but usually larger, and when fresh, possesses a delicious perfume and taste. Dates are sugary, very nourishing, wholesome, and require no preparation; but when dried, and a little old, as they usually are when imported into Europe and the United States, they are not much esteemed, and are little used in the countries where they grow. The best fruits have firm flesh of a yellow color. They are varied, however, by culture, in size and shape; some varieties being very large, succulent, and without stones. They are disposed in ten or twelve long bunches, pendent from the top of the tree, each bunch weighing from twenty to twenty-five pounds, which are sold at from sixty to eighty cents each.

Dates form the principal part of the subsistence of the inhabitants of Arabia and Barbary, and they are held in the highest estimation wherever they are met with. The inhabitants of Tunis and several other countries journey every year in crowds into Billedulgerid to procure dates. They are, says Burkhardt, by far the most essential article of food for the lower classes of Medina; their harvest is expected with as much anxiety and attended with as much general rejoicing, as the vintage in the south of Europe; and if the crops fails, or is eaten up by the locusts, universal gloom overspreads the population, as if a famine were apprehended. All the refinements of Arabian cookery are exhausted in the preparation of dates; and the Arabs say that a good housewife will daily supply her lord, for a month, with a dish of dates differently dressed.

There is an endless variety of this fruit. The best is said to come from Tunis, but they are most commonly brought from Smyrna and Alexandria. They should be chosen large, softish, not much wrinkled, of a reddish yellow color on the outside, with a whitish membrane between the flesh and the stone. Those that are dry and hard are of little value. When the dates are allowed to remain on the tree till they are quite ripe, and have become soft and of a high red color, they are formed into hard, solid paste, or cake, called by the Arabs, *adjoue*. This is formed by pressing the ripe dates forcibly into large baskets, each containing about two hundred pounds. In this state it is exported.

Almost every part of this valuable tree is converted to some use. The wood is very hard, almost incorruptible, and is used for building. The leaves, after being macerated in water, become supple, and are manufactured into hats, mats and baskets; the boughs the outer and inner bark of the trunk, and the fleshy substance at the root of the leaves, where they spring from the trunk, have all their respective uses. The nuts are ground for the manufacture of oil, and notwithstanding this hardness, are used as food for cattle, by being soaked in water they become soft, and are fed to camels, cows and sheep, being considered more nutritive than grain. The Chinese also use them in the composition of India ink. Palm wine is made from the trunk; for which purpose the leaves are cut off, and a circular incision made a little below the summit of the tree, then a deep vertical fissure, and a vase is placed below to receive the juice, which is protected from evaporation. The pith of the young trees is eaten, as well as the young and tender leaves. In Persia an ardent spirit is distilled from the fruit. A considerable traffic is carried on in the leaves, which under the name of *palms*, are sent to Italy to be used in the grand religious ceremonies of Palm Sunday.

There are about 1000 species of palms, being usually trees, with simple stems, inhabiting the warmest parts of the world, and especially tropical countries. That they were among the first land plants which were created, is proved by the numerous remains of their fruits and leaves which occur in the coal formations; and remains of them are met with through all the more recent fresh water rocks. They appear to prefer a soil in some measure salt, although many species are inhabitants altogether of inland districts and even of high mountains. Their favorite stations are said to be the banks of rivers, and water courses, and the sea shore, some species, scattered singly, others collected together in large forests.

There is scarcely a species of this order in which some useful property is not found. The coccanut, the date, and others are valued for their fruit; the fan palm and many more for their foliage, whose hardness and durability render it an excellent material for thatching; the sweet juice of the palmyra when fermented yields wine; the centre of the sago palm abounds in nutritive starch; the trunk of the *iriartea* or *ceroxylon* exudes a valuable vegetable wax; oil is expressed in abundance from the oil palm; an astringent matter resembling dragon's blood is produced by *calamus draco*; many of the species contain within their leaves so hard a fibrous matter, that it is employed instead of needles, or so tough that it is manufactured into cordage, and finally, their trunks are in some cases valued for their strength and used as timber, or for their elasticity, or their flexibility, as is the cane palm.

LIEBER.

THE STATE PRISON BILL.

We are obliged to put our paper to press early on Thursday, in order to supply our agencies at a distance with their papers on the day of publication. Owing to this our legislative reports have frequently appeared rather incongruous, undoubtedly, to readers in this vicinity. For instance, we supposed that the prison bill had passed on Wednesday evening of last week, and so stated in our paper; but the discussion was renewed on Thursday, and continued on Friday, as will be found below:

From the Albany Argus.

[Conclusion of Wednesday evening's proceedings in Senate.]

Several unsuccessful motions to adjourn were made during Mr. Root's remarks.

Mr. Rhoades at length offered a substitute for the 5th section, to the effect that all future contracts shall be submitted to the attorney general, for his opinion upon their legality.

Mr. SHERWOOD said that on a farther examination of the 5th section, he was convinced that it was objectionable.

The 5th section of the assembly bill was struck out, and the substitute adopted.

Another unsuccessful motion to adjourn was made.

Mr. ROOT then resumed his argument upon the bill—giving way a little after 7 o'clock.

Mr. STRONG moved a reconsideration of the vote by which the 5th section was struck out and the substitute of Mr. RHOADES adopted. Lost, 18 to 8.

The amendments were then ordered to be engrossed, and the bill to a third reading, as follows:

AYES—Messrs. Bartlit, Bockee, Clark, Corning, Denniston, Ely, Faulkner, Foster, Franklin, Furman, Hard, Hunter, Nicholas, Paige, Ruger, Scott, Sherwood, Strong, Varian, Varney—20.

NOES—Messrs. Dickinson, Dixon, Hunt, Peck, Platt, Root, Works—7.

Mr. STRONG moved that it have its third reading now. This being objected to, Mr. S. varied his motion so as to lay all orders of business on the table, down to the third reading of this bill.

Mr. ROOT resisted that motion, as out of order, but was not sustained by the chair. Mr. R. moved an adjournment. Lost.

The motion of Mr. STRONG prevailed, and the bill had its third reading and *passed*, ayes 25, noes 3, (Messrs. Dixon, Peck, and Root.)

The assembly returned the bill in relation to convict labor in the state prisons, with a message that they had concurred in the amendments of the senate to the 8th section, and nonconcurred in those to the 5th section. [The amendments to the 8th section, (which are concurred in,) substitute a commissioner to be appointed by the governor, secretary of state, and comptroller, for a legislative committee, to enquire into the practicability of employing convicts in the business of mining and smelting. The amendments to the 5th section (which are nonconcurred in) are intended to allow existing contracts to remain in force until they expire, and to require all future contracts to be submitted to the attorney general, and be made to conform to the law.]

Mr. ROOT moved that the senate insist on its amendment.

Mr. STRONG hoped not. He called for the ayes and noes. The senate insisted, by the following vote:

AYES—Messrs. Bockee, Denniston, Dickinson, Dixon, Ely, Faulkner, Hard, Hawkins, Hopkins, Hunt, Johnson, Nicholas, Peck, Platt, Rhoades, Root, Sherwood, Varney, Works—19.

NOES—Messrs. Bartlit, Clark, Corning, Foster, Franklin, Furman, Hunter, Paige, Ruger, Scott, Strong, Varian—12.

A resolution was received from the assembly, proposing a committee of conference on the bill in relation to convict labor, which was concurred in.

IN ASSEMBLY, *Thursday, April* 7.

The bill in relation to convict labor in the prisons came down from the senate with amendments.

Mr. WEIR moved that the house nonconcur in the amendments, and called for the question on each amendment separately—and first on the amendment to the 5th section—proposing in effect to legalize existing contracts, made in the face of the act of 1835, and therefore void. He opposed the amendment as fatal to the whole object of the bill.

Mr. DAVIS insisted that the contracts made in violation of the law of 1835, were illegal and void, and yet this amendment proposed to legalize these illegal and void contracts, and merely to prohibit them for the future. He regarded this as a most strange provision, especially as there was no pretence that the agents of the state prisons who made these illegal contracts, misconceived or misconstrued the law; but when it was admitted that they understood the law, and knowingly violated it. The amendments, in fact, proposed to re-enact the law of 1835, as to future contracts, leaving the contracts heretofore made in violation of that law to run out, and without any guarantee that this would not be violated as the act of 1835 had been.

MR. GROUT took the ground that the amendment to the 5th section neutralised the entire beneficial intent of the bill. Instead of confirming the existing law, and remedying violations of it, the Senate proposed to sanction such violations, and thus, saying in effect to the agents, that law might be violated by them with impunity. This he regarded as a most strange and unjust proceeding. It was bad enough that the law had been allowed to be violated to this day, but for the legislature to sanction such violations, was going to great lengths. But this was not all. The Senate had swept away also the committee proposed in the 8th section, to examine into the practicability of employing the convicts in mining, and substituted a single commissioner to be appointed by the Governor, Comptroller and Secretary of State. Could any gentleman on this floor guaranty that these officers were or would be favorable to the object of this bill, or that any thing could be accomplished, worth having, by this change? Could the expense saved by substituting one commissioner for three members of a committee, be a matter of consequence? He had heretofore gone into a calculation which showed that even if the three traveled 500 miles, (which they would not, probably,) the expense of the examination, including the per diem of the committee would not exceed $500. Was this trifling amount to control the choice of this house between a committee of three men of our own selection, for this duty, and a single commissioner, to be chosen by others? The bill, as it passed the house, amounted to but little. It simply contemplated the enforcement of a prior enactment in good faith. The only extraordinary provision in the bill was that in relation to the appointment of a committee with a view to ascertaining if mining can be successfully done by the convicts. The mechanics of the state would have just cause of complaint, if this bill finally took the shape which the senate had given to it.

Mr. STARR followed in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. DAVIS reiterated his objections to the senate's amendment to the 5th section.

Mr. WEIR again addressed the house in opposition particularly to the amendments to the 8th section, which he regarded as equally objectionable with the rest. His objections were that the persons who were to appoint the commissioner, were either hostile to the object of the mechanics, or were hostile to any expenditure to effect the object. Whereas, if the house appointed its committee and the Senate its member of it, the probability was that there would be two reports, one on each side of the question. That was just what was wanted. The legislature would then have both sides of the question. But if one man was appointed, his view of the question must be controlled, as there would be no opportunity to present the facts and arguments on the other side.

Mr. MCMURRAY briefly addressed the house in favor of adhering to the bill as it passed the house.

Mr. D. S. WRIGHT here moved the *previous question*, and the motion was seconded &c., and the main question put,

First, on nonconcurring in the senate's amendment to the 8th section, and the house concurred—the vote on non-concurring being 40 for, to 59 against.

On non-concurring in the Senate's amendment to the 5th section, the vote stood ayes 77, noes 31. So the house non-concurred.

Mr. WEIR inquired if it was now in order to move to strike out the enacting clause of the bill?—if so, he made that motion.

The SPEAKER replied that it was not in order.

The bill came back from the Senate, with a message that that body insisted on its amendments to the 5th section, non-concurred in by the House.

Mr. HUMPHREY moved that the House insist on its vote of non-concurrence and propose a committee of conference.

Mr. WEIR warmly opposed the senate's amendments, declaring his hostility to any bill but the bill which passed the house.

Mr. GROUT followed in a simlar train of remark; but before he had gone far, the hour of 2 having arrived,

The house took a recess.

Half past 3, P. M.

The house took up the state prison bill—the question being on Mr. HUMPHREY's motion to adhere to the vote of nonconcurrenee in the Senate's amendment to the 5th section of the Assembly bill, and to ask a committee of conference.

After some remarks from Mr. HUMPHREY, in support of his motion, the question was put, and

The House adhered to its vote of non-concurrence, and agreed to propose a conference on the matters of difference between the two houses.

Friday, April 8.

Mr. HUMPHREY, from the committee of conference on the matter of difference between the two houses, on the 5th section of the bill in relation to convict labor in the state prisons, submitted (by consent) a report—in favor of an amendment to the section—extending the time when existing contracts shall be abrogated, to the 1st of May, 1843, instead of the 1st of January, 1843, (as the bill read)—and in that shape recommending the passage of the bill.

The house concurred in the report, which passes the bill, if the senate agree also to the report of the committee of conference. The senate agreed.

LEX RABULA VS. MECHANICUS.

This is an action which for many years has been carried on in the chancery of our legislative lobbies and lobbying halls of the Assembly at Albany, by the rabula, or pettifogging lawyers, against the rights and the dearest interests of the Mechanics. By this craft the lawyers have not only their wealth, but many of them their living; and by this craft are the Mechanics robbed of the fruits of their honest exertions; aye and of their trades, their only means of obtaining a comfortable subsistence. In the good old times when such mechanics as Franklin and Roger Sherman had their just influence in legislation, the sessions were short, the laws were few, simple and cheaply administrated. Now the doctrine is taught that nobody but lawyers are competent either to make or to expound the laws, and so to expound them as to punish the henroost rogues, and let bankrobbersand wholesale plunderers slip through the loopholes. Words are strung upon words, laws piled upon laws, and books upon books, like Alps on Alps, until the lawyers are as much puzzled to find out their meaning as their clients are to find means to pay their extravagant fees; until not only the clients but even the lawyers themselves admit that to go to law is no way to redress grievances or to collect debts.

At first by laws chartering banks and other monopolies, the whole community, were robbed by the privileged orders of their property. The mechanics finding themselves robbed in *common* with their brethren bore the burden in silence. Submission to a common wrong is followed up by a blow at themselves, at their trades, their only sure and honest means of existence. Special legislation is employed to convert all the little thieves and rogues into bond Mechanics, and farm them out at low wages to a few lordly aristocrats, who employ them in such sharp competition with the free mechanics as to rob the latter of their trades. Thus are the free sons of our Franklins and our Shermans, attacked in front by our state army of chartermongering knaves and in the rear, by their vassal allies, with the Lex Rabula on their left flank. If, say the latter, to the free mechanics, you march forward, you destroy our clients; or backward, our *hatters* and *cobblers*. If you take ground to the right, you leave us alone to starve, or what is still more frightful, you leave us to be eaten up, without salt, by both parties; our great rogues whom we kept *out* of prison, and our petty rogues, who, unable to pay us for that service we put in to learn trades.

The farmers and laborers have no interest in continuing this double fraud upon the mechanics. On the contrary, they are plundered by it of much of their property, and but for the security afforded them by the nature of their occupations, would be robbed of them also. The mechanics can no longer submit to these wholesale schemes of plunder. They ask no *favor* from *any* class of their brethren. They only demand that their RIGHTS BE NOT TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT. If the farmers and laborers exercise their usual prudence, they will at once join the mechanics in putting an end to this heavy load of oppression. There is no reason to doubt that they will do so, upon the representations which the mechanics are now taking means to make to them. But if, contrary to all just expectations, such should not be the result, the farmers and mechanics have, in their own hands, the means of self protection.

They hold the balance between the two parties, and by wielding that balance, can, without injustice to any one, redress their own grievances. Will they do it? We shall see. FRANKLIN.

NEW PATENT FELTED CARPET.

The new carpet mentioned in the long discriptions of the recent royal christening, as having been laid for the occasion in St. George's Chapel, was the invention of H. A. Wells, Esq., an America. It is a new patent felted carpet, which is made without spinning or weaving. The order was given for one thousand yards for the floor of the Chapel and for the state apartments of the castle. In precisely nine days from the date the order was given, one thousand yards were at the castle and on the floor. The carpets were much admired and gave universal satisfaction The most brilliant and beautiful colors are printed from blocks of every possible variety, and it is said that these carpets can be sold by the retailer at about three shillings sterling per yard, and afford a remunerating profit to the manufacturer and wholesale dealer. These patent felted carpets appear likely to supersede the more expensive carpets now in general use.—*Chronicle.*

A silk manufactory has been established at Nashville, Tennessee.

EMINENT MECHANICS AND ARTISTS.

BENJAMIN WEST

Was descended from a respectable English family, belonging to the denomination of quakers, who had emigrated to America in 1667. His father, John West, was a merchant, settled at Springfield, Penn., where Benjamin was born, Oct. 10, 1738. In his seventh year he first gave indications of his future genius. As he was watching the sleeping infant of his eldest sister, it smiled, and, struck with its beauty, he sought some paper, and drew its portrait in red and black ink. The circumstances, however, in which he was placed, afforded him little aid in the development of his talents. There were neither professors, paintings, nor prints, among the primitive settlers of Pennsylvania. For some time he pursued his favorite employment with red and yellow colors, and indigo, given him by his mother, together with brushes made of the hair of a cat. At length a merchant, having seen his sketches, sent him a box of paints and pencils, with canvas prepared, and six engravings. With these, he made the necessary arrangements in the garret, where he commenced his labors with the dawn every morning, absenting himself entirely from school, until the inquiries of his master caused a search and discovery to be made. His mother found him in his *studio*; but her inclination to anger soon subsided on beholding his performance Instead of copying servilely, as might have been expected, he had composed a picture from two of the engravings, telling a new story, and colored with a skill and effect which, in her eyes, were surprizing This picture was exhibited sixty years afterwards in the same room with his sublime painting of Christ Rejected, on which occasion Mr. West declared that there were inventive touches in his first and juvenile essay, which, with all his subsequent knowledge and experience, he had not been able to surpass. As his surprising talent became known by degrees, he received invitations to the houses of the gentlemen in the neighboring towns, and was finally induced to attempt the portrait of a lady in Lancaster. His success drew crowds to sit to him, and he also executed a painting of the Death of Socrates for a mechanic there, who had a classical turn.

His future career now became a matter of anxious consideration, and the matter was submitted by his parents to the society; the result of whose deliberations was, that though the quakers refuse to recognise the utility of painting to mankind, they allowed the youth to follow the vocation for which he was so plainly destined. Soon afterwards he broke over the rules of the sect, by joining the troops under Forbes to proceed in search of the relics of Braddock's army.

In his eighteenth year he removed to Philadelphia, where he established himself as a portrait painter, and afterwards remained for a time in New-York. In 1760, by the kindness of some friends, he was enabled to visit Italy. There he obtained access to some of the most distinguished personages, and inspected the works of the great masters scattered over that country. At Rome he painted a picture of Cimon and Iphigenia, and another of Angelica and Medora, which increased his reputation, and opened the way to those marks of academic approbation usually bestowed on fortunate artists. He was elected member of the academies of Parma, Florence and Bologna, to the former of which he presented a copy of the St. Jerome of Corregio, of great excellence.

In 1763 he went to London, intending to proceed to his native country; but, by the instigation, it is said, of Sir Joshua Reynolds, he established himself in London, where his rise was rapid. He found a munificent patron and a steady friend in the king, George III., by whom he was immediately directed to paint the Departure of Regulus from Rome. A nobleman also made him an offer of a permanent engagement, with a salary of £700 a year; but he preferred depending upon the public.

On the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in 1792, he was elected president of the Royal Academy, and on that occasion delivered an address, which was much applauded. His success naturally produced a cloud of enemies, and many injurious, though unfounded, reports, were circulated against him. The opposition grew so strong, in numbers and ability, that he resigned his seat as president of the academy; but in a short time he was restored again, by an almost unanimous vote there being but one dissenting voice.

In his sixty-fifth year, he painted the celebrated picture of Christ healing the sick, for the quakers of Philadelphia, to aid them in the erection of a hospital. It was exhibited in London, where the rush to see it was very great, and the opinion of its excellence so high, that he was offered more than $14,000 for it. The success of this piece impressed him with the belief that his genius appeared to most advantage in pictures of large dimensions. As old age benumbed his facalties, and began to freeze up the well-spring of original thought, the daring intrepidity of the man seemed but to grow and augment. He painted several works of great size, but few were willing to purchase pictures which occupied so much room. Domestic sorrow mingled with professional disappointment, in the death of his wife, with whom he had lived sixty years in uninterrupted happiness. He did not long survive her. Without any definite complaint, his mental faculties unimpaired, his cheerfulness uneclipsed, and with looks serene and benevolent, he expired March 11, 1820, aged 82 and was buried beside Reynolds, Opie and Barry, in St. Paul's cathedral.

As his life was long and laborious, his productions were very numerous. He painted and sketched upwards of four hundred pictures, mostly of a historical and religious nature, and left more than two hundred original drawings in his portfolio.

MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS.

LITTLE FALLS,

Herkimer county, situated 6 miles east of the village of Herkimer, and distant 73 miles from Albany; contained in 1840, 3,881 inhabitants. The surface is hilly, and in some places mountainous; soil, sandy and argillaceous loam, based on limestone and granite, abounding with beautiful specimens of crystalized quartz. It is watered by the Mohawk river, on the south side of which runs the Erie canal, while on the north extends the line of the Utica and Schenectady railroad. Little Falls and Eatonvile are names of post offices.

The village of Little Falls, is situated on both sides of the Mohawk river, 73 miles west of the city of Albany. It was first incorporated in 1811, and amended in 1827; it now contains about 2,500 inhabitants, 300 dwelling houses, 1 Presbyterian, 1 Episcopal, 1 Baptist, 1 Methodist and 1 Roman Catholic church, a large and beautiful academy building, a banking house, 5 hotels and taverns, 30 stores and groceries, 2 printing offices, together with almost every other kind of mechanic work shops; and the village is rapidly improving in population and business. The Mohawk river here falls, in the distance of half a mile, about 42 feet, affording hydraulic power to a large extent, only a small portion of which is at present occupied for manufacturing purposes. There are now erected and in operation, 1 extencsive woollen factory, with new and improved machinery, 3 paper mills, 3 flouring mills, 2 saw mills, 1 plaster mill, 1 trip hammer works, 4 furnaces, 1 machine shop, 1 distillery, 1 brewery, 1 sash factory and 1 fulling mill. This place and vicinity is justly celebrated for its wild and romantic scenery, and is much resorted to by the admirers of nature and art. The gap between the mountains, through which the river has apparently worn for itself a passage, though apparently confined, is still of breadth sufficient to afford room for a large town. The rock at the river bed is primitive granitic gneiss, very hard, but is readily quarried and broken into building stones. Above this, on the mountain sides, lies the sand rock, and still higher, at the top, are extensve beds of blue limestone; great quantities of which have been used in constructing the locks, and for purposes of building, for coping and for flagging. Through this valley passes the Erie canal, on the south side of the river; and the Utica and Schenectady railroad and the Mohawk turnpike on the north; and it constitutes the avenue through which the products and travel of the great west must from necessity pass to reach tide water. An aqueduct crosses the Mohawk at this place, communicating with a feeder on the north side of the river, which is a fine specimen of masonry. A daily line of stages runs between Little Falls and Trenton Falls, and several mail routs north and south branch off at this place.

Disturnell's Gazetteer.

NEW YORK MILLS,

Whitestown, Oneida county, is an important manufacturing settlement, situated on the Sadaquada creek, 2 miles south of the village of Whitesboro. It contains about 900 inhabitants, 150 dwelling houses, 2 churches, 2 taverns and 3 stores. Here are two extensive factory buildings, constructed of stone, each 4 stories high, embracing a large cotton manufactory, in which in are operation about 400 looms, with the usual machinery appertaining thereto; the buildings and machinery were erected at a cost of $275,000. This establishment is one of the largest of its kind in the state, and is justly celebrated for the beauty and excellence of its manufactured fabrics; there is also a large bleaching and dying establishment in connection with the above works; altogether giving constant employment to above 400 persons.—*Ib.*

DUANE,

Franklin county, situated 15 miles south of the village of Malone, and distant 200 miles from Albany; contained in 1840, 324 inhabitants. This town was divided in 1841, and the name of Harrietstown given to the south part. It is yet almost a wilderness; containing several small lakes. The settlements are principally confined to the north part. The surface is uneven and hilly; soil, sandy loam of good quality; This town has become celebrated for its superior iron ore. There is located in the north part, the newly discovered '*native steel ore*,' as it is called; which is susceptible of being cast from the ore into the finest edged tools, probably not surpassed by any other mine in the known world. The following description of the Duane steele ore, is contained in the Geological Report for 1841:—"It is a mixture of partly fine and partly course ore, rather more of the coarse than fine; it is characterized by containing more hypersthene than usual exhibiting the lustre of bronze; it is also somewhat irridescent. Some small particles of sulphurate of iron appear in it, but not enough to injure it; also, masses of granular feldspar, and minute reddish garnets. The castings from the "steel ore," as it is termed, have of late acquired considerable celebrity, in consequence of their having been employed for edge tools; and I cannot now perceive," remarks Mr. Emmons, one of the state geologists, from experiments, "any reason why, for many kinds of edge tools, the material is not likely to come into extensive use; no instance of failure has come to my knowledge, when the tool had been properly tempered." *Duane* and Deer River Falls are names of post officers. At the former there is a blast furnace and forge; 1 scythe factory, 2 saw mills, 1 tavern, 1 store, and some 20 or 25 dwellings.—*Ib.*

SINGULAR CUSTOM.

The inhabitants of Upper Egypt have a singular custom: They load a boat with hives of bees, at a time when the honey is spent, and falling down the river in the night time, they stop in the morning at the best place they can find for the industrious animal to fly abroad to collect its wax and honey. When night draws on, and the bees have returned to their respective hives, they continue their voyage, stopping every morning as before. And thus, perhaps, in six weeks or two months, they arrive at Cairo, with a plentiful cargo in their hives, for which they are sure of finding a good market.

MAXIMS.

Shut your eyes to the faults of your neighbors; and open them very wide upon your own.

Stop your ears while gossips and slanderers are speaking of others. Take your fingers away to listen to the voice of friendly admonition.

Open your mouth but seldom, and never but to the point and purpose. Shut it close when misjudging friendship holds the glass to your lips.

ALBANY, SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1842.

OUR FIRST NUMBER.

We have republished the first number of our paper, which has been so long out of print, and much called for. It contains a portrait and biographical sketch of that extraordinary but obscure mechanic, Oliver Evans. His name is omitted in the Encyclopedia Americana, nor is it to be found in any of the biographical dictionaries, although entitled by his genius to a niche in them all. In the series of articles on the steam engine, now being published on our first page, further particulars will be given of his machines and improvements, in their proper order.

FILES OF THE PAPER.

We are now enabled to supply a few more sets of the Mechanic complete, to those who accompany their orders with the money. Subscribers at a distance must be aware of the expense of collecting their subscriptions, should they not be paid in advance, and therefore the propriety of our adherence to this rule.

VILLAIN AHOY!

One Lemuel Perkins, whose whereabouts we are unable to learn, has, we are informed, obtained subscribers to this paper, and received money therefor in Wayne county. Having waited a sufficient time to get further particulars of the gentleman's progress, the public are now cautioned against him, as he has never had any authority to act for this paper in any capacity. Those who have been deceived should make an effort to bring him up to quod

OUR LEGISLATURE AND THE PRISONS.

Our legislature has adjourned to meet again in August next. In reviewing the course pursued in relation to that subject in which the mechanics of this state feel so great and vital an interest, we certainly find but little to praise. A bill *has*, indeed, passed, but it is far from satisfactory, and could scarcely be tolerated, except on the principle of the old saw that *half* a loaf or even the promise of a loaf is better than none at all. It is only the token of promise that one section of the bill holds out that brings us to look with an effectation of complacency on the "*law*" of 1835, although it is a little guarded in its provisions, and more imposing as a whole.

It may be well to take a cursory glance into the past, and notice the strange policy which has been pursued this winter in relation to this subject. Last summer and autumn, it is well known, the mechanics, driven to the alternative by the evasive and unsatisfactory course of the state legislature, session after session, determined to carry their grievances to the ballot box, and strive by a resort to this sure remedy, to effect what they had petitioned for in vain. It was therefore purposed, instead of supporting distinct candidates, to ascertain which of those put forward by the two great political parties were favorable to the object of the mechanics, the abolition or modification of the present prison system, and support him without regard to his political opinions. Questions, therefore, to this effect were propounded to nearly every candidate for the legislature, and the answers were, generally, all the mechanics could wish, and if taken in good faith, satisfactory. *Some* of these replies were essentially *noncommittal*, and it was remarked that they were from persons who had had some *little* experience in legislative matters. That these persons were looked upon with suspicion need not be wondered, especially at a time when the probability of action on this important subject, scarcely existed. The election took place and the mechanics had the satisfaction of seeing such men elected as had pledged themselves to redress the grievances under which the mechanics had so long labored. The mechanics had this *satisfaction*, but it would have been no less had the opposing candidates been elected—for the eyes of all aspirants to office had been opened to the grievances in relation to which they had been questioned, and were most willing to redress them. The legislature met, and nearly the first bill introduced was one by Mr. Weir of New York, and published in our paper of Jan. 16. A committee was soon after appointed, consisting of three from the house and one from the senate, to examine into the state of the prisons, and report to the legislature. Mr. Weir, from this committee, presented a report, to which we have also referred, and also the same bill reported at the earlier part of the session. The consideration of this bill was postponed from time to time until very near the close of the session, and it was feared that nothing would be done, and the subject be staved off again, as it had been many times before. At length, after great effort, the subject was brought up, and some discussion had upon it; how the first bill was disposed of, and the old law of 1835 revived, our readers have already been apprised.

We have *now* instead of something in which we can rely, only the promise of some future action which is to be satisfactory. For this, of course, we must be exceedingly thankful; but, we repeat, the bill passed *is not the thing*. To be sure, the law of 1835 is to be enforced, for penalties are attached to the nonfulfilment of the act to the letter. We are not prepared to say whether this will amount to any thing or not; one thing we know, the law of 1835 was openly violated, and the statute broken, by the agents of the prisons, as much as it ever was by the burglar or highway robber, as directly broken, and yet—what was done? Nothing!

Will it be so again? We trust not. The law, therefore, as it now stands, is word for word the same as the bill published by us a few days since, except that the portion relating to the annullity of contracts is so amended as to read on the first of May, 1843, instead of January next.

This is all, then, that has been accomplished this winter, and though not satisfactory, yet far better than nothing. We hope, however, that the mechanics will not fold their arms in slumber, and suffer the subject to drop here, for much remains to be accomplished. The ball begins to move, and we must now keep it in motion. At another session we shall have the report of the committee deputed to examine the mines of the north; and should their report be favorable, and under present circumstances we doubt not it will, the end for which we have struggled for years will be accomplished, and the odious prison system receive its death blow. The fabric totters already, and the mechanics of New York, unless we mistake the signs of the times, by the 16th of April, 1843, will be freed from the injurious competition of convict labor, and the floodgate shut upon the tide of corruption flowing in upon them from those moral lazar houses—the state prisons. One source of mischief to the great and worthy class whose cause we advocate will be stopped, and free from these retarding causes the mechanics of this state will take that high station to which they are entitled, and, rich in the free spirit of independence they inherit from their revolutionary sires, guard with jealous care their rights and their interests—interests that can interfere with those of no other class, and which are interwoven with the prosperity of *all*.

STATE PRISON EXPENSES.

The editor of the Auburn Journal and Advertiser has been delivered of a dozen lines on state prisons. It says that if the legislature do away with mechanical labor in the prisons, they will have to make an appropriation of $30,000 to meet the expenses of the present year, and adds that it will be paying rather dear for the whistle, since the funds will have to be raised by a *tax*. The funds have always been raised by a *tax upon mechanics*, for the benefit of agents and contractors—a *tax* upon a part, instead of the whole community. Let the tax fall equally upon all classes and it will scarcely be felt; while at present it is robbing the few for the benefit of many, and of some who least deserve it. The Journal and Advertiser has been quite mute on this topic, and has but faintly ventured forth at the end of the contest. It might have felt it necessary to throw in a paragraph to soothe the dejected spirits of a few disappointed contractors and their hangers-on. But the business might have been managed in a much better way, by encouraging them to look for relief to another session, when the mechanics, lulled by this sop from the pan, may have less strength in the legislature, and the laws of the last one be undone before they shall have gone into effect.

MANUFACTURES AND MANUFACTURERS

We copy the following tables from Hazard's Commercial and Statistical Register, a highly useful weekly magazine, published at Philadelphia. They serve to show the importance of our home manufactures.

Value of Goods manufactured in the United States in the year 1840.

Machinery made,	$10,9[illegible]0,581	Glass and lking glasses,	2,328,993
Hardware and Cutlery,	6,451,967	Earthen ware,	1,104,625
Precious metals,	4,734,700	Sugar refined,	2,916,709
Various do,	9,770,442	Chocolate,	79,500
Granite, marble, &c.	2,442,950	Confectionery,	1,142,965
Bricks and lime,	9,730,945	Paper,	5,641,495
Woolen goods,	20,636,999	All other of paper, &c.,	511,567
Cotton do	46,350,453	Cordage,	4,678,398
Silk do	119,814	Musical instruments,	933,924
Flaxen do	332,205	Carriages & wagons,	10,287,927
Mixed manufactures,	6,545,503	Products of mills,	76,545,946
Tobacco do	5,819,568	Ships,	7,016,084
Hats and caps,	8,764,342	Furniture,	7,555,455
Straw bonnets,	1,476,505	Houses,	41,917,401
Leather and saddlery,	33,134,463	Other manufactures,	34,788,383
Drugs, medicines, &c.	4,151,999		
Turpentine and varnish,	660,927		$377,451,754

Number of Persons in Manufactures in the U. States.

Cotton,	72,119	Soaps and candles,	5,641
Wool,	21,342	Distilleries & breweries,	12,294
Machinery,	13,441	Powder mills,	497
Hard ware, &c.,	5,492	Drugs, paints and dyes,	1,649
Cannon and small arms,	1,744	Glass, earthenware, &c.,	4,949
Precious metals,	1,536	Sugar refineries, &c.,	1,385
Various do	6,667	Paper,	4,726
Granite and marble,	3,734	Printing and binding,	41,522
Bricks and lime,	22,597	Cordage,	4,464
Salt,	2,367	Musical instruments,	969
Iron,	30,497	Carriages and wagons,	21,994
Silk,	767	Flour and other mills,	60,789
Flax,	1,609	Ships and furniture,	15,983
Mixed manufactures,	75,905	Houses & othr buildings,	65,801
Tobacco,	9,394		
Hats, caps, and bonnets,	29,176		555,850
Leather,	43,154		

The wages paid to the above persons employed in manufactures may be estimated to amount to over ONE HUNDRED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS per annum.

PROGRESSION OF MIND.

The rapid advancement both in science and art for the last few centuries is a common theme, on which much has been said and of which much remains unsaid. For our own part we have no hesitation or fear in avowing our belief in the unlimited expansion of the human mind. We cannot for a moment entertain the idea that it is compassed by certain bounds beyond which it can never pass, nor do we believe that it has ever before attained that high point it now occupies. It may be true indeed that with reference to our knowledge in some arts we must concede that perfection which we cannot now obtain. But this fact does not affect our general principle, that all things considered we are immeasurably above the highest point to which mind has ever yet attained. Mind has in itself a perpetuating power. Knowledge is gained by observation and experience, and the creative faculties of the mind are employed in devising means to give the results of observation and experience perpetuity. It has succeeded, and they now exist in "the sacred treasures of the past." Knowledge accumulates in a geometrical ratio; we combine present with past attainments, and knowledge gained opens the gate and makes clear the way for higher attainments, and as time passes on, each year leaves us higher in the intellectual scale. The light of ages gone augments the glory of the brilliant day in which we live, and the march of mind is onward, approximating to that high point of perfection, to which we may aspire if we cannot reach.

STEAMER TROY.

We see it stated in the Budget that the splendid boat Troy has commenced her trips. Much is anticipated of this boat by her friends and the public, on account of her excellect machinery and extraordinary beauty of model. The directors have chosen to test with her Mr. Lighthall's horizontal engine. "The facility, ease and safety of its movements," says the Budget, "and the almost imperceptible influence which it has upon the boat, proves that it is the conception of a mind of extraordinary practical discernment and mechanical genius; and the unprecedented success of this application of its powers demonstrates the superiority of the principles of this engine over any other. Mr. LIGHTHALL, the inventor and patentee, is a self-made and almost self-taught engineer, and continues to superintend himself the machinery of this boat. His industry and unwearied application deserve the highest reward; and we trust at no distant day to see added to his high fame those pecuniary benefits which genius, however much entitled to them, is too apt to make a secondary consideration.

OUT OF BUSINESS.

The Montreal Times says there are 200,000 females out of employment in Canada. The Times is probably a little ironical. If it means that there are so great a number who are *above useful* employment, it is justified in saying that they are *out of* employment. In every community there may be found more or less who fear to degrade themselves by useful labor, and who occupy their *leisure* in studying how to kill time effectually, without leaving a trace behind which shall accuse them of any thing like industry. Some even will endure the pinchings of hunger and cold rather than be suspected of pursuing an honest *trade* for a subsistence.

CASTOR OIL.

The cultivation of the castor bean for the manufacture of oil seems to have received a new impulse at the west, particularly in Illinois. One firm in St. Louis worked up 18,500 bushels of beans in four months, producing 27,750 gallons of oil; and we are told that 800 barrels have been sold at $50 per barrel. Here is a domestic manufacture with a vengeance. But this is the work of only one establishment for four months. Health would seem to be worth some care to preserve, if it were only to avoid the pain of swallowing those 800 barrels of castor oil. But the greater part of these hundreds of barrels are choked down the throats of infants, who have been improperly fed till they become restless; then paragoric or some other opiate is administered to *still them;* if their constitutions are proof against beef and potatoes, and paragoric, their digestion at least is disordered, and then comes the castor oil. The most effectual preventive of sickness among children, we apprehend, would be to compel those having charge of them to take the oil, when they allow them to get sick through neglect, or make them so by improper treatment.

A WATCHMAKER'S EPITAPH.

The following *professional* epitaph is copied from a tombstone in Lidford Churchyard, Devon, England.

Here lies in horizontal position
The *outside case* of
George Routleigh, Watch Maker,
Whose abilities in that line were an honor
To his Profession.
Integrity was the *main-spring*,
And Prudence the *regulator* of all the
Actions of his Life.
Humane, generous, and liberal,
His *hand* never stopped
Till he had relieved distress.
So sincerely *regulated* were all his movements,
That he never *went wrong*;
Except when *set agoing*
By People
Who did not know
his key.
Even then he was easily
set right again.
He had the Art of disposing his *time*
So well,
That his *hours* glided away
In one continual round
Of Pleasure and Delight,
Till an unlucky Moment put a period to
His Existence.
He departed this Life,
November 14th, 1802,
Aged 57:
wound up
In hopes of being *taken in hand*
By his Maker,
And of being
Thoroughly *cleaned, repaired* and *set agoing*
In the World to come.

VEGETABLE IVORY.

We were lately presented with a beautiful turned cane, or umberella head, having all the appearance, as regards whiteness, hardness and close texture, of the finest ivory, which we were much astonished to learn was a vegetable production, and grew upon a tree in one of the southern islands in the South Pacific ocean, procured by the French discovery ships. It is evidently of the cocoa-nut family, and we are informed that some of the nuts from one of which this head is made are of a size sufficiently large to make a billiard ball. It is certainly a very curious and important discovery, and will, should it be proved as durable as ivory, decrease the demand for the tooth of the elephant.

SYNOPSIS OF NEWS, ETC.

The number of convicts in the prison at Sing Sing on Saturday last was 761 males, 74 females; total, 835. The number whose terms expire during this month is 22.

It would require 6,000 tons of silver to pay the yearly interest of the debt of Great Britain.

A battle was fought in March last between the Peruvians, 4,000 men, under Pres. Gemarra, and the Bolivians, 7,000, under Gen. Bolivian. The Peruvians were defeated, with the loss of 3,000, among whom was Gemarra; Bolivian loss, 150.

During the present week there arrived at Fairmount Locks, one thousand and ninety forty-two pound cannon balls, weighing together 102,906 pounds. They were cast at the anthracite furnace at mount Carbon, and are part of a large contract recently made for the supply of the government.

A hollow tree was lately felled in Bucks county, which measured seven feet in diameter, and contained as inhabitants, a swarm of bees, three grey squirrels, two large hooting owls, a nest of flying squirrels, and a large number of mice.

The Cincinnati Chronicle says that eggs were sold in the market of that city, on Thursday last, at *three and a half cents a dozen!*

The contractors on the St. Lawrence canal advertise for 1000 laborers and 100 stone masons to prosecute that work.

In Quebec, on the 1st day of April, the thermometer was down to zero, at sunrise, the St. Lawrence covered with fields of ice, four feet of snow on the ground on a level, and not half the tops of the fences visible.

Dr. Collyer, an eminent practitioner in Animal Magnetism, has established himself in Boston, and proposes to treat nervous diseases Magnetically.

The Rochester aqueduct is said to surpass in magnitude and finish any similar structure in the country. An iron railing, four feet high, eight hundred and fifty feet long, and weighing about ninety-four thousand pounds, will extend the whole length of the aqueduct.

All shaving shops, it is said, are to be closed on Sunday in Philadelphia; the banks and barbers having unanimously resolved to suspend operations on that day.

The late frosts, it is said have done injury to the peach trees.

The intensity of the light of the sun is computed by Dr. Lardner to be equal to 300,000 full moons.

Among the numerous depredating *varmints* which infest Liberia, are white rats. In size, shape and character they resemble the common house rat; and they appear to differ only in color of the skin and hair, which appear white.

The Onondaga Standard says there were 200 dwellings erected in that place during the last year, and that 50 are in the course of erection at this time.

Dr. Lyell in a lecture on Niagara Falls says, that there is a certain geological proof that they have receeded 3 miles, and probably 7; that they receede on an average about a yard per annum. If the longest distance may be considered correct, it is over 55,000 years since the retrocession commenced; and at the same rate it would take 16,000 more for the cataract to work its way into Lake Erie.

Extravagance in fine clothing is often a recommendation to the eye—but not to the understanding of men. Dr. Franklin, says, 'A fine coat frequently covers intolerable ignorance, but never conceals it.'

Eli Hoyt, of Warren, Ohio, 22 years of age, was shot dead by a boy, a few days since, who was carelessly snapping an old rifle, which had lain by some twelve months.

The Legislature of Iowa has refused to exempt Quakers from the performance of military duty.

Judge Betts has decided that under the general bankrupt law a wife can retain her jewels owned before marrage; Judge Story has given a contrary decision, and says she must surrender them. Which is right?

Judge Betts of New York has recently decided that a partner may take the benefit of the Bankrupt law without a dissolution of Copartnership; that is, the firm may be perfectly solvent and the partner taking the act may be insolvent. The law has nothing to do with those with whom he is connected.

It has been reserved for some literary constable of the present age to arraign the ladies universally as thieves, on the serious charge of hooking each others frocks!

The woollen factory of Mr. West, near Indianapolis, Indiana, was burnt down on the 22ult. Loss $5,000—insured $3,000.

A correspondent of the Troy Whig says that the annual gross income of the United States is for property $200,000,000, and for labor $800,000,000. He estimates the value of the property at about $4,000,000,000.

There were 20 cases of small pox, in the Sing Sing prison, a few days ago.

There are six hundred paper mills in the United States, employing a capital of $16,000,000, and manufacturing nearly to that amount annually; giving support to more than 50,000 persons.

The Southern tier of counties in this State and the adjacent counties in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, abound in water power, which will be accessible by the N. York and Erie Rail Road. The U. S. Census shows that in these counties there are 3151 saw mills and 742 grist mills, which are moved by water power. —*Journal Commerce.*

The Pennsylvania Senate has passed a bill securing mechanics and laborers their wages, in cases of the insolvency of their employers.

A lady in Baltimore the other day presented the world, at one birth, with three boys and a girl.

There have been large sales of lead lately for exportation to Europe. A few years ago, our supplies of the article were imported from the same places to which we are now exporting it.

Two swans, nearly full grown, were caught on the Chesnut Ridge, near Pittsburgh, last week, by a couple of girls who had gone, very early in the morning, to hunt for the cows.

Clayton, the intrepid western æronaut has advertised an ascent from Nashville. He says he contemplates some of the most daring ærial voyages this summer that have ever been attempted—one of which, in July or August, will be to "launch an open boat down the falls of Niagara supported and protected by the balloon."

In the Baths at Rome there were accommodations for 235,862 persons to bathe in warm water at the same time; and a sufficient quantity of water was kept constantly heated from daybreak till dusk. We can never, says the Boston Post, hope to see baths on this magnificent scale, unless some plan be hit upon for heating Boston harbor to the boiling point.

A trial of thirty Paixhan cannon, with balls, was made on the beach at South Boston, last week. One of the cannons burst, throwing a fragment, weighing nearly three hundred pounds, a distance of fifty feet into the air, which in its decent was completely buried in the earth. All the rest proved highly satisfactory, and equal to any imported. They were from Alger's foundry.

During the year 1840, the English consumed 23,136,000 pounds of tobacco. Last year it was 22,100,000 pounds. The decrease is attributed to its adulteration. The articles used are yellow ochre and acetate of lead,—excellent ingredient for the stomach of an invalid.

From the Fort Pickering (Tenn) American Eagle of March 25th. Capt. I. Sellers of the Caspian, arrived last night about 11 o'clock, 2 days from St. Louis, reports that 8 hunters, 2 from 4 companies, had just come from the Rocky Mountains for provisions. They stated that there was 14 feet of snow on the Mountains, and that the hunters were out of provisions, and likely to perish. The snows had been tremendous during the whole winter. The Missouri, when the snows melt, will pour down a flood never before witnessed.

The satinett, factory of Mr. Zena Kingsley, in Westhampton, Mass. was entirely destroyed by fire on the 1st April. Loss estimated at $3000. No insurance.

The salt Manufacturers of Barnstable county, in Mass., are to have a meeting at Orleans on the 12th inst. to take measures to protect their interests in the approaching revision of the tariff. The manufacture of salt commenced, says the Yarmouth Register, in that county, seventy years ago, and it has been the means of profit to many capitalists, who are now in danger of being reduced to poverty by the introduction of the foreign article.—*Taunton Whig.*

The brewers and grocers of Canton, Ohio, have resolved to sell no *yeast* to the Temperance folks of that place, because the latter will not encourage the sale of liquors. The consequence will be that the Temperance folks will make their own *yeast*, and the brewers will lose the sale of two articles instead of one.

It appears from a statement in the Brussels papers that the *material* of the different Belgian railways at this moment consists of 126 locomotives, 117 tenders, 95 diligences, 179 chars-a-banc, 235 wagons for passengers, 854 carriages for goods, and 202 wagons for material of the roads. etc.

The total system of railroads now proposed to be constructed in France is to extend to 400 leagues, which will require 200,000 tons of wrought iron.

M. Dierecky, a paper manufacturer of Ghent, has discovered that the refuse end of asparagus makes excellent paper, at half the usual expense.

Out of eight suspended banks in Philadelphia, six of them occupy the most costly and elegant marble edifices of that city.

It is said that the year 1841 was the wettest year that had been known in Great Britain for a long time.

In the year 1800, a French prisoner, at Liverpool, exhibited a most extraordinary propensity to devour cats, of which he ate one hundred and seventy-four in one year.

It is said that the Welland canal will be ready for navigation by the middle of April, and that the Vandalia, one of the new vessels with Erricson's propellers, will be among the first to make her appearance on the Lakes.

Florida has adopted a stay law, which provides that any defendant in a suit upon the payment of ten per cent. of the principal and interest, may obtain a stay of execution for sixty days—and so on until the whole is paid.

A part of the works of the Salisbury Manufacturing Company have been stopped, throwing out of employ a large number of hands.

A London paper says that "statute law in England may be defined to be a parliamentory collection of words of doubtful and disputed meaning!" Some of the statute laws in America might be "defined" pretty much in the same way.

The times are so hard in Halifax that the two editors of the Times newspaper are obliged to smoke the same cigar.

The male inhabitants of Bloomfield, Perry county, Pa., turned out with guns and every other kind of weapon, a few days ago, to kill six full grown bears which it was announced were rushing down upon the village. The bears proved to be six fat innocent *swine* which were running at large in the woods. The next day no male inhabitants were to be seen about Bloomfield.

At Carlisle a juror recently plead in abatement of a fine for nonattendance at court, that he took no newspaper, and was not aware of the time! This excuse the Judge most righteously held to be only an aggravation of the offence.

A Miss Lincoln attempted to drown herself at Philadelphia on Saturday night. Whether she was tired of life altogether, or only tired of living single, is not stated.

The cotton factory of the United Manufacturing Co., at Pottowomut, R. I., was destroyed by fire last Thursday night. It was insured for $25,000.

The Kennebec Journal states the singular fact that only one life has been lost by steamboats in New England waters, east of Boston, since they came in use, now nearly twenty years, and this was that of the man who jumped overboard from the New England in his fright.

The Boston Traveler says that it appears from accurate sources, that the value of coal and wood imported into Massachusetts from foreign countries, amounts to about $600,000 dollars annually; that the value of coal and wood imported from other states of the Union, amounts to about $1,900,000, the aggregate of both being $2,500,000.

A company has been formed in Russia for the manufacturing of wine and brandy from whortle berries, according to the process introduced by General Count de Chassenon at St. Hubert, in Luxembourg, in 1837.

Fourteen hundred swine were recently passed over the Western Rail Road from Albany to Boston.

The extensive works in the city of Troy, it is said by the Whig, have suspended operations for the present. Nearly the whole population of one ward of the city is thereby thrown out of employment. "Eight hundred human beings seeking work in such times as these is indeed the saddest sight under the sun."

The Circassians are a brave race. In the last engagement they had with the Russians, they left 3,500 of Nicholas' soldiers dead upon the field. The troops of the Russians outnumbered those of the Circassians more than two to one. These troops, it is said, are led on by Poles, who are paying up some old scores which they owe the Russians.

An English paper states that many of the lower classes of the population were leaving the capital, under the impression that London would be destroyed by an earthquake on the 16th March.

BROKEN BANKS.

The following schedule, showing the rates at which the notes of sundry broken banks of this state are redeemed, if redeemed at all, by the comptroller, will be found convenient for reference. It is copied from the Albany Daily Advertiser:

Notes redeemed by the comptroller at par:

City Bank of Buffalo.	Commercial Bank, N. Y.
City Trust, N. Y.	Wayne County Bank.
Chelsea Bank.	Lafayette Bank, City of N. Y.

Notes redeemed by the comptroller at the following rates:

	Stock &c.	Stock & Ext. &c.
Binghamton Bank,	70	74
Cattaraugus Co. Bank,	85	77
Bank of Lodi,	80	97
Bk of Western N.Y. Rochester,	75	
Bank of Commerce, Buffalo,	76	
U. S. Bank, "		77
Mechanics' Bank, "		63
Erie County Bank, "	72	60
Phœnix Bank, "		73
Bank of America, "	78	76
Merchants' Ex. Bank, "	81	65
Union Bank, "	81	
Tonawanda Bank,	62	
Tenth Ward Bank,	94	
Farmers' Bank Seneca Co.,	par	74
Millers' Bank, Clyde,	par	94

Banks whose notes are not redeemed by the comptroller:

Allegany Co. Bank.	Washington Bank.
Bank of Buffalo.	James' Bank.
Commercial Bank, Buf.	St. Lawrence Bank.
Staten Island Bank.	Commercial Bank, Oswego.
Bank of Ogden.	Clinton Co. Bank.
Farmers' Bank of Geneva.	

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6thly. To present to Legislators such a clear exposition of the staple manufactures, as may dissuade them from enacting laws which obstruct industry, or cherish one branch of it to the injury of another.

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MISCELLANY.

RISE IN YOUR NATIVE STRENGTH.

BY JOSEPH H. BUTLER.

Rise in your native strength,
Mechanics of the land,
And dash the iron rule
From rude oppression's hand!
By all the might of MIND,
Assume the place of man—
Heed not the scoff of those
Who scorn the artisan.
Ye sinews of a state,
Your nation's pride and boast,
Whose glory crowns her hills,
And guards your native coast,
Ye are her WEALTH IN PEACE,
Her vital breath ye are;
And, when the bolts of death are hurl'd,
Ye are her shield in war!
By the eternal sword,
To stern brow'd Justice given
By Freedom's holy self,
The might of wrong is riven!
Strong monuments arise,
In record of your praise,
Transmitting down your names,
To men of other days—
Proclaim to all the world
Your usefulness and worth,
Speak out with trumpet tongue,
Ye mighty men of earth!
Was not the soil you tread
Won by your fathers' blood?
Then on Oppression's self
Roll back oppression's flood!
Seize with determined hand
The standard sheet of RIGHT,
And let not even death
Turn your resolves to flight.
By Him who gave to man
The soul's ethereal fire,
That glorious day is NOW—
Our motto, onward—HIGHER!

LAW DUST AND SAW DUST.

To furnish a village with tackle for tillage,
Jack Carter betook to the saw,
To pluck and to pillage the same little village,
Joe Pettifog took to the law.

They angled as pliant for gull and for client,
As sharp as a vessel for rats,
That what with their saw dust, and what with their law dust,
They blinded the eyes of the flats.

Jack brought to the people a bill for the steeple,
They swore that they would not be bit;
Put out of a saw pit, just into a law pit,
Joe tickled them up with a writ.

Says Jack the saw rasper, I see neighbor grasper,
We both of us live by the stocks;
While I for my savings, turn blocks into shavings,
You lawyers are shaving the blocks.

THE TANNER'S WIDOW.

Mr. and Mrs Pitman, would have been the best assorted and happiest couple in all Leighton-Buzzard, but for certain natural differences of temper, habits and pursuits; and their perpetual squabbles on the subject of dress, house-keeping, amusements and all that regarded pecuniary disbursements. He stoutly declared he would not die a beggar, she as sturdily declared that she would not live like one; and both kept their word. It certainly did not become a thriving tanner's wife, as she very justly observed, to go draggling about in rags and rabblish; but then it was unseemingly, as he very pertinently rejoined, to flaunt through the town in scarlet velvet pelisses that set all the place in a blaze, and wear such a variety of plume crowned bonnets, that more people went to church to look at her single head, than to mark the three into which the clerzyman regularly divided his Cerberus sermons. Whether this was the fault of the lady, the congregation, or the reverend Mr. Snuffleton, he did not presume to decide; but all those who were poorer than Mr. Pitman joined in condemning his wife's extravagance, while all those who were richer contented themselves with laughing at it. Certain it is that she introduced unheard of luxuries among the good trades people of Leighton-Buzzard. She it was who first put a livery upon one of the apprentices, and made him wait at table when there was company, to the great clamour of the whole town and tan yard, and she it was who first placed before her guests goose berry wine ennobled with the title of Champagne, which, being in lank, narrow shouldered bottles, well sealed and secured at the mouth, and very sparkling, frothy and vapid when it found vent, might well have passed off, even with travellers, as a genuine native of France. The neighbors, who came eagerly to taste of this rarity, were quite as eager, when they went away, to abuse its donor; and Mr. Pitman, anxious for his double credit as a manufacturer of gooseberry wine and a frugal tanner, burnt with impatience to reveal the secret: but his wife having sworn that she would order a new velvet pelisse from Bond street the moment he divulged, he kept his tongue between his teeth, and his money in his pocket. To do this the more effectually, he had repeatedly declared to the trades-people that he would not pay one farthing of his wife's extravagant debts; and he was a man of such firmness and decision of character, that Mrs. Pitman was constantly obliged to go to him, and insist upon having the money immediately, that she might discharge them herself.

The grave-digger in Hamlet assures us that a tanner will considerably outlast others under ground; though they should not therefore outlive their fellows upon earth, they may consider themselves gaining in the long run. There is no quarrelling about tastes, but for my own part I would rather be a lively young man than a mummy, however old. Mr. Pitman might have made the same decision, had a choice been afforded him; but it was not. He quitted us all without a notice, evaporated as it were, without any visible motive of becoming invisible; and when I inquired the particulars of my friend, the schoolmaster at Leighton-Buzzard, he could only claim in the words of Cicero, "Abiit—evasit—excessit—erupit!

Mrs. Pitman was as inconsolable as bombasin could make her; her cap was a perfect pattern of grief, and nobody could have suspected her of laughing in her sleeve when they saw the depth of its weepers. And yet, as a lover of expense, and not of her husband, she might well have been justified in some ebullition of pleasant surprise, when she found that owing to a prize in the lottery, which he had kept a secret, and certain usurious transactions which he had no great temptation to reveal, he had left her one of the richest widows in the neighborhood.

MODERN JOHN GILPIN.

Our ancient friend John Gilpin, in his trip to Edmonton, has recently been almost outdone in the person of the reverend person described in the following narrative, from an English paper. The Rev. C. B. Mariott of Thundersley, having decided to proceed to the rustic quietude of Harlow, determined on entrusting himself on the Northern and Eastern rail; accordingly he possessed himself of a snug first class seat, and was soon spinning along before the gale to his destination. "Harlow Station" at last stared him in the face, as plainly as paint and board could stare; but alas! the carriage door had become fixed by the rain; all his exertions could not get it down to enable him to serve the officers with notice of his intention to quit. All his calling out, and hammering the glass, as heavily as glass may be safely hammered, brought no one to his prison door; and as it was in vain for him to attempt to put a bit in the mouth of a steed which is fed with coke and driven with a kitchen poker, he soon found himself whirling along to the next station at Sawbridgeworth. Here he succeeded in achieving his liberty; and was consoled by the information that, on the *usual* terms, he could be conveyed back to Harlow. In due time the reverend traveller resigned himself to his fate and to the uptrain, but scarcely was he under weigh, when his fellow passengers informed him that *that* train did not stop at Harlow. This was too true; onwards went the monster with puff and snort, regardless of his wishes—all he saw of the desired haven of his hopes being the glimpse which steam, at thrity miles an hour afforded him. Of course it was useless lingering at the next station, so onward he flew to town, where, on a proper representation of the case to the directors, the hotel expenses of the night were paid by them; and the next morning he was again skimming the earth towards Harlow. Again the painted board announced to him his journey's end; again, too, the carriage door became obstinate in its slides, and it was not till the train was almost again in motion that the reverend gentleman was enabled to set foot upon the desired spot; even then it was not effected without some risk, as, in his haste to avoid a second trip to Sawbridgeworth, he did not perceive another leviathan, who a few yards off was hissing and boiling up the rail upon which he alighted.

LOST ARTS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

If the Thebans 1900 years before Christ, knew less in some departments of useful knowledge than ourselves, they also in others knew more. They possessed the art of tempering copper tools so as to cut the hardest granite with the most minute and brilliant precision. This art we have lost. Again, what mechanical means had they to raise and fix the enormous imposts on the lintels of their temples at Karnac? Architects now confess that they could not raise them by the usual mechanical powers. Those means must, therefore, be put to the account of the "lost arts." That they were familiar with the principle of Artesian wells has been lately proved by engineering investigations carried on while bering for water in the Great Oasis. That they were acquainted with the principle of the railroad is obvious, that is to say, they had artificial causeways, levelled, direct and grooved, (the grooves being anointed with oil) for the conveyance from great distances of enormous blocks of stone, entire stone temples and colossal statues of half the height of the monument. Remnants of iron, it is said, have lately been found in these grooves. Finally, M. Arago has argued, that they not only possessed a knowledge of steam power which they employed in the cavern mysteries of their pagan freemasonry, (the oldest in the world, of which the pyramids were the lodges,) but that the modern steam engine is derived, through Solomon Decaus, the predecessor of Worcester, from the invention of Hero, the Egyptian engineer.

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